

Extra

The Newsletter for
the employees
of The Rhode Island
Department of Mental
Health, Retardation &
Hospitals
August 27, 2006

Employees Honored for Advocacy Work

At L.I.F.E., Inc.'s Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony on June 16, three members of the Division of Developmental Disabilities staff each received a Volunteer Advocacy Award for their "outstanding efforts to assist clients in meeting their goals." Social Case Workers Lauren Ostiguy, Norianna Royles and Rachel Duhamel accepted the awards from L.I.F.E. CEO Mary Ann Wiedenhofer, who said, "I can't imagine our clients experiencing the success that they have without Rachel, Lauren and Norianna. They are all extraordinarily dedicated, caring, sensitive and resourceful social workers. They really make a difference and we are most appreciative of their devoted services."

L.I.F.E., Inc. provides residential services for persons with developmental disabilities.



l to r: Lauren Ostiguy, Norianna Royles and Rachel Duhamel. With them is Stephanie Horridge.

Team Begins Department-wide Quality Assessment

On July 31, a team led by Tricia Leddy, MHRH chief of staff, was briefed on the plan to perform a department-wide quality assessment of MHRH programs, supports and functions. MHRH and the critical services that it provides will be clearly described, and a comprehensive plan developed to meet the future needs of Rhode Island's most vulnerable citizens. When completed, the process will create a master plan for the department, which Director Nelson will present to Governor Carcieri in October.

"The first step will be a comprehensive fact-gathering exercise," explained Leddy. Members of the assessment team have formed three workgroups to look at the department's three program divisions. The process is designed to answer the following questions:

1. *What are the major historical influences on our service system?*
2. *What services does MHRH currently provide?*
3. *For whom?*
4. *Who provides the service?*
5. *Where do the funds come from? How much does it cost? Do other revenue sources exist?*
6. *How do the services of MHRH compare to services provided in other states?*
7. *How can we maximize the use of our facilities, as well as our staff, to most efficiently provide patient care and administer the department's programs?*

With the information provided by answering these questions, the next phase will involve MHRH staff, community partners, and other stakeholders to address the following questions:

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Extra is published
bi-monthly.
Please send your
comments and story
ideas to Patricia
Borges, editor, Public
Information Office,
Barry Hall.

Team Begins Department-wide Quality Assessment *(continued from page 1)*

8. *Are the services provided by MHRH on the cutting edge? Could we do it better?*
9. *Are there needed services that are not being provided?*
10. *Is the population served by MHRH and their service needs changing?*
11. *How can we maximize our resources to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities for the future?*

The results will form the framework and an implementation plan for the future of the department, to be completed by in October.

For more information on the quality assessment process or to provide input, contact the QA Team at QATeam@mhrh.ri.gov.

Work group teams are:

Division of Developmental Disabilities: Christianne Petrin-Lambert, consultant, and MHRH/DD Administrators Maya Colantuono and Camille Letourneau; Division of Behavioral Healthcare: Charles Maynard, consultant, and MHRH/BH Administrators Ron Tremper and Carol Burton; Division of Hospitals: Bill White, consultant, and, MHRH/ESH Administrators Joseph Lapenta and Lou Pugliese.

Editor's note: Look for a detailed letter addressed to all MHRH employees on the intranet describing the quality assessment process, and inviting your input in the development of the comprehensive plan to meet the future needs of the people we serve.

ESH Doctor Published in JAMA

The June 14 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* printed an article by Eleanor Slater Hospital doctor Scott Allen.

The article appeared in the "A Piece of My Mind" column, and featured a very poignant look at the relationship between Doctor Allen and a former patient at the hospital.

Dr. Allen describes weekly lunch dates with "Wilkey", and the reader soon learns that Wilkey is kind, insightful, and imbued with wisdom on living a good life that we would all do well to heed.

In recognition of the publication of Dr. Allen's article, and to honor the memory of Wilkey, who has passed away on October 13, 2005, a coffee hour is planned for Thursday, October 12 at 11:00 am in the Virks Third Floor Day Room. All hospital staff members that cared for Wilkey over his many years at the Eleanor Slater Hospital are invited to attend and share their stories of him.

If you would like to read the article written by Dr. Allen, "Dining With Wilkey", please call Nicola Pallotti, ESH librarian at 462-3439, or visit the medical library on the third floor of the Regan Building.

Helene Martin Appointed to RI Commission on Women

ESH Nurse Executive Helene Martin was appointed to a three-year term to represent MHRH on the RI Commission on Women.



"I look forward to working with the Commission, and will work specifically on issues that pertain to women with mental health or substance abuse issues, or who have a developmental disability. I think these topics are of vital importance, and go hand-in-hand with our department's mission."

The commission's mission is to support women in achieving full equality in all areas of life, through the promotion of rights and opportunities for all women. RICW envisions a society where all women have achieved full equity in all aspects of life. The commission serves as a forum for women to be heard; embraces full participation of women; and facilitates opportunities for education and advocacy.



Providence Center Program at Mathias

On August 2, the short-term (90 days or less) residential facility operated by the Providence Center for persons with problems related to substance abuse was moved to the Pastore Center campus. "We felt obligated to find an alternative site for the continuation of this important program," said MHRH Director Ellen Nelson.

The emergency move resulted from persistent problems with the structure on Plain Street in Providence where the program had been housed. The state-owned building needs major repairs to the roof, making the structure temporarily unliveable.

The program is an essential part of the state's behavioral healthcare treatment system. It has a capacity to treat 40 men and women, who voluntarily participate in this program.

Providence Center CEO Dale Klatze noted that, "Through this partnership, we have been able to retain an incredibly important program in the state." Nelson added, "This is a fine example of the public and private sectors rolling up their sleeves and combining resources to meet a critical community need for substance abuse treatment."

The move to the Mathias Building at the Pastore Center will be temporary, until an adequate location can be found, or the former site on Plain Street has been renovated.

Federal Waiver Approved

The Division of Developmental Disabilities' application for the Rhode Island Home and Community-Based Waiver has been approved by the federal Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services.

The Waiver provides federal matching funds for Rhode Island to administer programs for persons with developmental disabilities. Programs include residential supports, day activities, supported employment, private duty nursing, respite care, environmental modifications, medical equipment, and personal care. Susan Babin, MHRH quality assurance administrator, who, together with DDD finance administrator Camille Letourneau and DHS administrator Diane Kayala, worked to complete the application, explained that this year it required more written detail than ever before.

For example, states had to submit a quality management strategy that required them to collect and analyze data to identify opportunities for quality improvement. "We had to develop a process to use data in a positive way to effect systems change. We are reviewing various trends and recommendations to improve service delivery and achieve better outcomes," explained Babin.

The five-year waiver is in effect until June 30, 2011.

Mark Your Calendar!


On **September 12** Career Awards ceremonies at the Arnold Conference Center will honor employees for career longevity. A morning session beginning at 10 o'clock will recognize persons with 10, 15, and 20 years of service.

At 1 o'clock in the afternoon, persons with 25, 30, 35 years and above will be recognized.

On **September 13** at 1 o'clock, a ceremony will honor Zambarano employees for career longevity. The ceremony will include all employees eligible for recognition.

September is National Recovery Month. On **September 16**, in keeping with the nation theme "Join the voices for recovery in building a stronger, healthier community," MHRH will host a celebration in conjunction with WaterFire from 4-7 pm, at the bottom of Steeple Street along the Providence River. Artwork and a candlelight vigil will recognize those working toward recovery, as well as remember those who have died. Live entertainment, family activities and information booths will be available. The WaterFire display will begin at 6:55pm. For more information, contact Lori Dorsey at 462-0645 or Rebecca Boss at 462-0723.

On **November 3**, an MHRH employee health fair will take place at the Arnold Conference Center from 9:00 am - 3:00 p.m. Organized by Patricia O'Donnell, a variety of screenings, information and activities will be available. Look for more information soon!



Flowers, Fruits, Vegetables, of All Kinds at Farmers' Market

The first of several weeks of the Farmers' Market at the Pastore Center have been a huge success!

Employees from all five departments on campus are delighted with the many varieties of fresh edibles, including lettuce, beets, corn, tomatoes, onions, melons, berries and much more. Several varieties of fresh-picked flowers are also on sale to brighten someone's day!

Open every Friday from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm at the Margaret Walsh Park at the corner of West Road and Howard Avenue, selections will increase as crops come to fruition. Expect apples, squash and pumpkins in the fall.

The continuation of the Farmers' Market depends on the support of employees on campus, so mark your calendars and visit the market on Fridays. You will be pleasantly surprised at the fresh-picked offerings that you will find!